

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method in a wireless portable communication device for enabling
the wireless portable communication device, the method comprising:
5 monitoring for a proximity signal including a first authorization code
transmitted from a controller unit;
 determining whether the first authorization code is valid upon
receiving the proximity signal;
 if the first authorization code is not valid;
10 monitoring for a second authorization code during a
predetermined re-enabling time period;
 determining whether the second authorization code is
valid upon receiving the second authorization code during the
predetermined re-enabling time period; and
15 enabling normal operation of the wireless portable communication
device upon determining that a valid authorization code has been received.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein, after monitoring for the proximity
signal, determining a valid authorization code has not been timely received if
20 the proximity signal is not received within a predetermined monitoring time
period.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 disabling the wireless portable communication device upon failing to
25 receive the second authorization code during the predetermined re-enabling
time period.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the normal operation of the
wireless portable communication device by enabling the normal operation for
30 a predetermined operating time period.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein disabling the wireless portable communication device upon determining the second authorization code is not valid by disabling a specific functionality of the wireless portable communication device.
- 5 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the first and second authorization codes comprise at least one of password, personal identification number, and biometric information.
- 10 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a notification upon determining at least one of:
the first authorization code is not valid; and
the second authorization code is not valid.
- 15 8. The method of claim 7, wherein providing the notification by at least one of:
transmitting a notification signal to the controller unit;
displaying the notification; and
audibly playing the notification.
- 20 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the second authorization code is the same as the first authorization code.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the second authorization
25 code during the predetermined re-enabling time period by at least one of:
receiving the second authorization code directly from a user interface of the wireless portable communication device; and
receiving a second proximity signal including the second authorization code transmitted from the controller unit.
- 30 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the controller unit is a second wireless portable communication device.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein determining whether the first authorization code is valid by comparing the first authorization code to a stored authorization code.

5

13. The method of claim 12, prior to monitoring for the proximity signal, further comprising:

entering the stored authorization code directly into the wireless portable communication device using a user interface of the wireless portable communication device; and

10

entering the stored authorization code directly into the controller unit as the first authorization code using a user interface of the controller unit.

14. The method of claim 12, prior to monitoring for the proximity signal, further comprising:

15

entering the stored authorization code directly into the wireless portable communication device using a user interface of the wireless portable communication device;

transmitting the stored authorization code to the controller unit; and

20

entering the transmitted stored authorization code into the controller unit as the first authorization code.

15. The method of claim 12, prior to monitoring for the proximity signal, further comprising:

25

entering the stored authorization code directly into the controller unit as the first authorization code using a user interface of the controller unit;

transmitting the stored authorization code to the wireless portable communication device from the controller unit; and

30

entering the transmitted stored authorization code into the wireless portable communication device as the stored authorization code.

✓

16. A wireless portable communication device configured to be enabled and disabled based upon proximity to a controller unit, the wireless portable communication device comprising:

5 a proximity signal monitor, the proximity signal monitor configured to monitor and to receive a proximity signal within a predetermined monitoring time period, the proximity signal including a first authorization code transmitted from the controller unit;

an authorization code evaluator coupled to the proximity signal monitor, the authorization code evaluator configured to determine whether the first authorization code is valid when the proximity signal monitor receives the proximity signal;

an operation enabler coupled to the authorization code evaluator, the operation enabler configured to enable normal operation of the wireless portable communication device if the authorization code evaluator determines the first authentication code is valid, and

15 wherein if the first authorization code is not valid, the proximity signal monitor monitors for a second authorization code during a predetermined re-enabling time period, the predetermined re-enabling time period tracked by the timer,

20 the authorization code evaluator determines whether the second authorization code is valid when the proximity signal monitor receives the second authorization code during the predetermined re-enabling time period, and

25 if the second authorization code is valid, the operation enabler enables the normal operation of the wireless portable communication,

otherwise, the operation enabler disables the wireless portable communication device.

17. The wireless portable communication device of claim 16, further comprising:

a timer coupled to the proximity signal monitor and to the operation enabler, the timer configured to track the predetermined monitoring time period and the predetermined re-enabling period.

18. The wireless portable communication device of claim 16, wherein the authorization code evaluator determines:

the first authorization code is not valid if the proximity signal monitor fails to receive the proximity signal within the predetermined monitoring time period; and

the second authorization code is not valid if the second authorization code is not received within the predetermined re-enabling time period.

19. The wireless portable communication device of claim 18, wherein the second authorization code is the same as the first authorization code.

20. The wireless portable communication device of claim 18, further comprising:

a user interface coupled to the proximity signal monitor, the user interface configured to accept a user input code; and

memory coupled to the user interface and to the authorization code evaluator, the memory configured to store the user input code,

wherein the authorization code evaluator determines at least one of:

whether the first authorization code is valid by comparing the first authorization code to the stored user input code in the memory, and

whether the second authorization code is valid by comparing the second authorization code to the user input code stored in the memory.

21. The wireless portable communication device of claim 20, wherein the proximity signal monitor receives the second authorization code by at least one of:
- receiving the second authorization code entered in the user interface
 - 5 during the pre-determined re-enabling period; and
 - receiving a second proximity signal including the second authorization code.
22. The wireless portable communication device of claim 18, further
- 10 comprising a notification generator coupled to the authorization code evaluator, the notification generator configured to provide a notification upon determining at least one of the first authorization code is not valid and the second authorization code is not valid, the notification generator comprising at least one of:
- 15 a transmitter coupled to the authorization code evaluator, the transmitter configured to transmit a notification signal to the controller unit;
 - a display coupled to the authorization code evaluator, the display configured to display the notification; and
 - a speaker coupled to the authorization code evaluator, the speaker
 - 20 configured to audibly play the notification.